with antiquity "[3] ? and will you yet call yourself
young *?* Fye, fye, fye, sir John 1

to forgotten facts: his illustrations are drawn from notions obscured by time: his *wit* is therefore *single,* such as none has any part in but himself. JOHNSON.

I believe all that Shakspeare meant was, that he had *more fat* than *wit:* that though his body was bloated by intemperance to twice its original size, yet his wit was not increased in proportion to it.

In ancient language, however, *single* often means *small,* as in the instance of beer; the strong and weak being denominated *double* and *single* beer. So, in The Captain, by Beaumont and Fletcher: " sufficient *single* beer, as cold as chrystal." Macbeth also speaks of his " *single* state of man." See vol. xi. p. 49, n. 6. STEEVENS.

Johnson's explanation of this passage is not conceived with his usual judgment.—It does not appear that Falstaff's merriment was antiquated or unfashionable: for if that had been the case, the young men would not have liked it so well, nor would that circumstance have been perceived by the Chief Justice, who was older than himself. But though Falstaff had such a fund of wit and humour, it was not unnatural that a grave judge, whose thoughts were constantly employed about the serious business of life, should consider such an improvident, dissipated old man, as *single-witted* or half-witted, as we should now term it. So, in the next Act, the Chief Justice calls him, a *great fool:* and even his friend Harry, after his reformation, bids him not to answer " with *skool-born* jest," and adds, "that white hairs ill become a *fool* and jester."

I think, however, that this speech of the Chief Justice is somewhat in Falstaff's own style, which verifies what he says of himself, "that all the world loved to gird at him, and that he was not only witty in himself, but the cause that wit is in other men." M. MASON.

I think Mr. Steevens's interpretation the true one. *Single* however, (as an anonymous writer has observed,) may mean, *feeble* or *weak.* So, in Fletcher's Queen of Corinth, Act III. Sc. I.:

" All men believe it, when they hear him speak,
" He utters such *single* matter, in so infantly a voice."

Again, in Romeo and Juliet: " *O single-soled* jest,

solely singular for the singleness." i. e. the tenuity.

In our author's time, as the same writer observes, small beer was called *single* beer, and that of a stronger quality, *double* beer.

MALONE.

3 — antiquity?] To use the word *antiquity* for *old age*. is not peculiar to Shakspeare. So, in Two Tragedies in One, &c. 1601: